

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION ELEMENT

General Overview

Coordination and cooperation among the many units of government at all levels is a very important goal. Yet, there are instances where the actions of one governmental unit can negatively affect another unit as in the case of annexation, creation of a tax increment financing (TIF) district, or certain transportation improvement projects, to name just a few. In such instances, it is important for the various units of government to strive for consensus to the mutual benefit of all involved. In the absence of this, financial and human resources can be wasted with little result. More importantly, intergovernmental conflict can foster a negative attitude toward all governmental units. Even where conflict does not exist, cooperation between local units of government can often provide more or different services at a lower cost to taxpayers.

Objective of Element

The intent of this element is to briefly identify those governmental units that the Town may affect or interact with relative to this Comprehensive Plan and its implementation (Exhibit I-1). Also, existing intergovernmental agreements are identified and briefly described. Finally, this element is intended to identify existing or potential conflicts with other governmental units. All of this is intended to lay the foundation for goals and objectives that will maintain existing relationships and foster new areas of cooperation in the coming years.

Exhibit I -1. Basic Objectives of the Intergovernmental Cooperation Element.

- Identify and describe the roles of other governmental units.
- Identify problems and opportunities.
- Develop goals and objectives that will continue existing intergovernmental coordination and cooperation and create new areas for cooperation.

Review of Other Governmental Units

County Government

The town of Cottage Grove is located in eastern Dane County. The city of Madison is the county seat. The County was created in 1836. The Dane County Board of Supervisors includes 39 members and the town of Cottage Grove is located in Supervisory District 21. Following the official population counts from the 2000 census, the county is in the process of redistricting. This could divide the Town into more than one supervisory district.

Cities and Villages

The city of Madison is the largest city in the county and is located immediately to the west. The city of Monona is located between Madison and the Town. Sun Prairie is located to the northwest.

The village of Cottage Grove is located in the northern part of the Town. Other villages located to the east include Deerfield, Marshall and Cambridge. The village of McFarland is located to the southwest.

The village of Cottage Grove recently adopted a comprehensive plan pursuant to state statutes and was reviewed prior to the preparation of this plan.

Towns

The town of Cottage Grove is bordered on the north by the town of Sun Prairie, by Deerfield to the east, by Pleasant Springs to the south and by Blooming Grove to the west.

Regional Planning Commission

Within Wisconsin there are nine Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs), which are formed by executive order of the Governor. All but five counties in the state – Columbia, Dodge, Jefferson, Rock and Sauk – are served by a RPC. They provide planning assistance on regional issues, assist local interests in responding to state and federal programs, act as a coordinating agency for programs and activities and provide planning and development assistance to local governments.

The Dane County Regional Planning Commission only serves Dane County (all of the other RPCs serve more than one county). The offices of DCRPC are located in Madison.

School District

The Town is located in the following six school districts: Deerfield Community, Marshall, Monona Grove, McFarland, Stoughton Area and Sun Prairie Area. Each of these are located in Cooperative Educational Services Agency (CESA) District #2. Its offices are located in Milton.

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is geographically organized into eight district offices throughout the state. Dane County is in District 1, along with Columbia, Dodge, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Lafayette, Rock and Sauk counties. Its offices are located in Madison.

As noted in the Transportation Element, WisDOT has recently completed or is nearing completion on a number of statewide transportation planning projects. These documents were reviewed to understand how these efforts would directly or indirectly affect the provision of transportation services in the region and to the Town. In addition, WisDOT programmatic budgets were reviewed to identify what projects, if any, have been programmed that might increase existing transportation capacity, efficiency and/or safety in the area.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is organized into five geographic regions. Dane County is located in the South Central Region along with 12 other counties.

The DNR has been very successful over the years in working with local governments to establish recreational trails throughout the State. The *State Recreational Trails Network Plan* (draft) was reviewed to identify existing and proposed trails in the region.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

The Town and Village currently share police, fire and EMS services, which helps to reduce overall costs for both jurisdictions and create greater continuity in the provision of these vital services. The Town and Village also contract with the same solid waste company as a cost-savings measure.

As a consequence of litigation between the Town and Village over annexation issues, the Town and Village entered into stipulated settlement agreement and adopted a governmental

agreement in 1996 pursuant to Wis. Stats. §66.023. This agreement will terminate 10 years after adoption, unless mutually extended by both parties. The agreement established growth areas for the Village and provided a mechanism to review annexation proposals that fall outside of those growth areas. For parcels to be annexed that are not located in one of the Village's growth area, three-quarters of the total number of members on the combined Village and Town Boards must approve the annexation. The agreement also created a Boundary Committee consisting of Town and Village representatives to foster an ongoing dialogue. Since the agreement was adopted, it has been amended on two different occasions to accommodate annexation proposals.

Existing or Potential Areas of Intergovernmental Conflict

Over the years, the Village and Town have had a number of disagreements over annexation as previously mentioned above. Despite the adopted intergovernmental agreement, the Village and Town continue to have disagreements over annexation proposals as recently as 2000.

Both the Village and Town have had a long-standing concern about the possibility that the city of Madison may annex land in the western part of the Town. Along the Highway 12 / 18 corridor, the City is at the western boundary of the Town. The City is also fairly close to the northwest corner of the Town. The Town should enter into a three-way agreement with the Village and the City to establish growth boundaries to create a green space along Madison's eastern boundary. This will help to create greater certainty for all parties and help preserve the Town's and Village's unique community character.

Another area of conflict revolves around stormwater management. Door Creek and Koshkonong Creek flow into the Town from the Sun Prairie area to the north. It is believed that much of the flooding in the Town is due in large part to development in the Sun Prairie area. To remedy this situation, the Town will likely need to take the first step. It will need to determine to what extent the flooding is caused by upstream development and to identify potential solutions. Once this information is available, the Town can approach upstream jurisdictions to develop a watershed approach to this apparent problem.

Depending on where a proposed subdivision is located in the Town, there could be up to three separate reviews of the proposal. If the proposal is located in the extraterritorial area of the Village, the Town, County, and Village would all need to review it. In the remaining portion of the Town, both the Town and County would review the proposal. Given this layered approach to development review, there has been conflict between these entities not to mention the uncertainty and additional expense for subdividers. To help expedite the development review process, these three entities should work together to develop a unified review process that is based on intergovernmental coordination and that clearly defines the process and development criteria.

Goals, Objectives, Policies, and Recommendations

The goals, objectives, policies and recommendations for this element are found in Chapter B.